

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2021-MAR-22, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor B. Geselbracht, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor S. D. Armstrong (vacated 4:26 p.m.)
Councillor D. Bonner
Councillor T. Brown (vacated 4:53 p.m.)
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor Z. Maartman
Councillor I. W. Thorpe (vacated 4:47 p.m.)
Councillor J. Turley

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
S. Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
J. Holm, Director, Development Approvals
L. Mercer, Director, Finance
L. Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture
J. Bevan, Manager, Culture and Special Events
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning
F. Farrokhi, Manager, Communications
D. Fox, Manager, Building Inspections
W. Fulla, Manager, Business, Asset and Financial Planning
A. Collins, Recreation Coordinator, Cultural Services
M. Miller, Senior Financial Analyst
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
K. Gerard, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Agenda Item 5(1) Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning Matrix – replace GPC Matrix.
- (b) Agenda Item 6(e)(1) Strengthening Communities Service Grant Opportunity – add PowerPoint presentation titled "Strengthening Communities' Services Program".

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, as amended, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday, 2021-MAR-08, at 1:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning Matrix

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

- The Agenda Planning Matrix has been updated to reflect the topics chosen at the 2021-MAR-08 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting and supported by Staff work plans and Council's Strategic Plan
- Rankings of priority items are as follows:
 1. Neighbourhood Associations
 2. Capital Planning Process
 3. Crosswalk Safety
 4. Safety/Security
 5. Waterfront Walkway
 6. Vancouver Island Conference Centre
 7. 1 Port Drive
 8. Sports Venues and Tourism Strategies
 9. Committee Structure
 10. Election Signage
 11. Street Entertainers Bylaw
- In three to four months items can be adjusted based on priorities and accomplishments

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Communication strategy to neighbourhood associations regarding participation in a future meeting
- In person meetings with representatives of the different neighbourhood associations

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, advised the Committee that Staff would contact all neighbourhood associations to advise them of the date and time of the meeting and how they can apply to be a delegation.

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, advised the Committee that the Provincial public health orders are still in effect which means that no members of the public are permitted to attend meetings in person; however, Zoom could be utilized for these meetings.

Committee discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Move Neighbourhood Associations to later in the year when public health orders allow for in person meetings
- First step in the process should include a master list of neighbourhood associations and the criteria for recognizing an association such as amount of members, charter document and elections
- Intention of the next meeting regarding neighbourhood associations will include formalizing the standards around the associations and discussion regarding governance models
- Ensure communication to the wider community regarding neighbourhood associations, their importance in the community and how to start up an association

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, advised the Committee that Staff will be bringing forward a presentation regarding how local neighbourhood association function. Staff will then meet with different association regarding governance and models.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, advised the Committee, there is an opportunity to come back to the Committee at the 2021-APR-12 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting to provide feedback and suggestions from neighbourhood associations within the community.

6. REPORTS:

a. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE:

1. Building Permit Function Review

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services.

Presentation:

1. Allan Neilson, Neilson Strategies, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
 - Due to high growth, COVID-19 challenges, changes to the *Building Act*, increasing number of building code requirements and local bylaws a review of the building permit function was implemented to see if the application and review process could be streamlined to meet the benchmarks set by Staff
 - Objectives of the study included:
 - Reduce wait times for building permits
 - Implement a new approach to managing risk (balance risk with liability)
 - Engage with industry professionals and Staff to design solutions
 - Achieve cost neutrality within the recommended changes

- Meetings and engagement included twenty-five staff member interviews, Staff from other departments such as Fire, nineteen industry professionals were consulted, two former Chief Building Officials, Municipal Insurance Association of British Columbia, Nanaimo Development Group, Mid-Island Business Initiative and Vancouver Island Construction Association
- Expectations are high for meaningful change and ensuring that Staff and industry professionals are involved in the implementation of recommendations/changes
- Feedback suggested that significant changes were needed in the commercial permits section where high volume and high value applications are reviewed
- Criticism from industry professions focused on the application and reviewing system not City Staff who are respected by the industry professionals interviewed
- Four inter-related focus areas were identified and included:
 1. Application review process
 2. Building inspections section
 3. Technology
 4. Relationship to the industry (development of the community is a partnership)
- Each of these sections had areas for improvement including incomplete applications, reluctance to rely on industry professionals, staffing numbers, experience, overtime, and applicant complaints
- The loss/retirement of experienced Staff have played a large role in permit wait times
- Interviews raised concerns regarding the pressure of high growth and high scrutiny within the City
- Currently Staff are having to reformat all applications due to compatibility issues with Tempest software and the online system
- Recommendations include:
 - Implementing a fast track program where low risk or smaller projects such as decks, accessory buildings or minor alterations can be fast tracked through the system
 - The hiring of one new supervisor and one new building official to focus strictly on the fast track applications
 - Starting an Approved Professionals Pilot Project which would transfer more responsibility to industry professionals to ensure complete applications are being submitted
 - Implement a Joint Building Permit Advisory Working Group which would include five City Staff and five industry representatives which would design the fast track eligibility and promote partnerships between the City and industry
 - Develop an internal service agreement that would set expectations of referrals to working groups

- Improve technology by implementing an improved online application portal, online payment systems (credit cards) and new dashboard for applicants to view the status of applications
 - Streamline referrals by implementing target timelines, layout specific responsibility for each party and align the priorities of each referral group
 - Cost recovery through a Local Government Development Approvals Program grant program that was recently announced by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- The City's permit fees are in the low to medium category when compared with other, like municipalities and industry professionals interviewed stated they would pay high fees if turnaround times were decreased

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Cost recovery required by law
- The fast track process being based on size of the development; the larger the development the faster the permit approval process
- Staff time in reviewing applications that have been submitted by industry professionals such as architects and engineers

Allan Neilson, Neilson Strategies, advised the Committee:

- There is no lawful requirement for cost recovery
- Including low risk, residential permits in the fast track process keeps the risk and/or liability solely with the owner of each property
- Large, complex developments have a high risk factor to the public and if not scrutinized by building officials thoroughly the City becomes partially liable if injuries or mistakes occur
- Industry professionals noted, when interviewed, that City Staff have noticed errors before that could have been a liability in the future
- The pilot program would include more reliance on industry professionals so review time by City Staff could be decreased

Committee discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Membership of the joint working group and how members would be picked or nominated to join
- Staffing levels here compared to other similar sized cities
- Obstacles in finding and retaining qualified staff
- Other ways to help applicants ensure their applications are complete
- Education and communication to developers/applicants regarding wait times and detailed reviews are to protect them and the City
- Higher permit fees versus wait times for permits
- New staffing structure

- Timeline for implementing the recommendations and communication regarding how the recommendations are working
- Grant money available through the Local Government Development Approvals Program

Allan Neilson, Neilson Strategies, advised the Committee:

- The Joint Working Group members should be nominated by industry professionals and there is a strong desire to implement this group from industry professionals interviewed
- Qualifications required for building officials are high and would recommend hiring junior or low qualified Staff and help them train and further their education with on the job experience
- The supervisor for the fast track group would focus solely on fast tracked applications which increase time for thorough reviews of the high risk, more complex applications reviewed by Level III officials

Committee discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Recommendations coming to a future Finance and Audit Committee meeting
- Funding if the grant application is unsuccessful
- Updating software, online processes and compatibility with current software in use
- Training time for a building official to go from Level I to Level III

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, advised the Committee:

- A separate report will come to the Committee or to a Regular Council meeting shortly regarding the grant money available
- Recently two staff members have acquired their Level III Building Official status and training for building officials to acquire the Level III status takes approximately 7 years

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee receive the March 2021, Building Permit Function Review draft report by Neilson Strategies Inc. and recommend that Council:

1. refer the additional Staff positions recommended in the draft report to the Finance and Audit Committee for consideration in the 2021-2025 Financial Plan;
2. direct Staff to proceed with implementation of the remaining six recommended changes outlined in the draft report; and
3. direct Staff to submit a grant application to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' Local Government Development Approvals Program to support the implementation of established best practices and to test innovative approaches to improve development approvals processes.

The motion carried unanimously.

Committee discussion took place regarding updates on development approval times being communicated through the Council dashboard and ensuring that Council is informed of questions from the public regarding processing times.

Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer, advised the Committee:

- The fast track process is practical and ensures that low risk, small applications can be approved quickly leaving room for the large developments to be reviewed in detail
- Updates will come to Council or the Committee periodically to inform Council on the implementation of the recommendations and how the recommendations are working

It was moved and seconded that Council direct Staff to provide an information update every two months regarding development approval times compared to the benchmarks set by the City of Nanaimo. The motion carried.

Opposed: Mayor Krog and Councillor Turley

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting recessed at 3:16 p.m.

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting reconvened at 3:27 p.m.

By unanimous consent Council agreed to move Agenda Item 6(e)4 – Mayor's Task Force on Recovery and Resilience to follow the Building Permit Function Review:

b. COMMUNITY WELLNESS/LIVABILITY:

1. Mayor's Task Force on Recovery and Resilience

1. Mayor's Leaders' Table

Introduced by Shelley Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services:

- One of the key recommendations from the Mayor's Task Force on Recovery and Resilience (the Task Force) was to establish a Mayor's Leaders' Table which will:
 - Collaborate on multi-levels of government and align capital asks to promote cohesive infrastructure in Nanaimo
 - Provide input on major issues and opportunities in Nanaimo
 - Build collaboration among key entities
- Establish a working group/youth council with representatives from organizations such as School District 68, Vancouver Island University and youth services
- The Mayor's Leaders' Table would consist of the Mayor, two members of Council and senior representatives from organizations, municipalities, service providers, businesses in Nanaimo as well as representatives from Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN)

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Asking the Youth Professional Network and the New Immigrant Centre to be included at the Mayor's Leader's Table
- Procedure for picking members to join the Leader's Table
- The timeline for the Mayor's Leaders' Table and the mandate

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, advised the Committee that the Terms of Reference for the Mayor's Leaders' Table is not finalized and members could be nominated, picked by the Mayor or put their names forward for a vote by Council.

Shelley Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Three sub working groups will be formed out of the Mayor's Leaders' Table group who will put forward recommendations which the Mayor's Leaders' Table will take to Council
- The Mayor's Leaders' Table will meet quarterly with the smaller, sub groups meeting more often

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council establish the Mayor's Leaders' Table with representation of: Mayor and two Council members; key social, cultural, educational, healthcare, technology, labour, arts, tourism and business organizations; and, chaired by the Mayor and subject to applicable Legislative Support and oversight. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Nanaimo Builds - 100,000 Voices Campaign Concept

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

- The 100,000 Voices Campaign will leverage engagement from the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process and tie into the City's 150th birthday which is in 2024
- The logo represents an inclusive Nanaimo and the colours in the "O" represent the diversity of the voices that shape our City
- This campaign can build upon the Reconciliation and Anti-racism recommendations from the Mayor's Task Force and can help unite the City

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The amount of different branding/logos and marketing of Nanaimo
- Cost in changing the City's logo and re-branding of the City of Nanaimo
- Conflict with the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process and engagement fatigue
- Ensuring that First Nations are recognized in this campaign and that the concept is taken to a Protocol Agreement Working Group meeting for SFN input and approval

- Ensuring that Governance Excellence is noted in the strategic goals

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct staff to develop the 100,000 Voices Campaign Concept and report back to Council with the marketing and communications plan, including a budget. The motion carried unanimously.

c. REIMAGINE NANAIMO:

1. REIMAGINE Nanaimo Update on City Portrait

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
 - Workshop on March 10th included 40 participants, six zoom rooms, 75 potential indicators discussed and 21 indicators were up voted
 - Utilized an online application called MIRO which enabled smaller group Zoom rooms where different topics could be focused on
 - The next steps for indicators and targets include reviewing workshop results, identify/confirm baselines, confirm measurement process and acquire Council endorsement
 - Indicators can evolve and are fluid based on measurements and feedback
 - Indicator #1 – Proximity to Resources which crosses many areas of the donut model and equates where we live to where we eat, shop, play, go to school and work
 - Next steps include developing scenarios based on draft indicators and preparing for Phase 2 Community Engagement
 - Indicators for walkability can be used to evaluate land use scenarios to achieve more walkable neighbourhoods
 - Phase 2 will include an engagement series, community events, workshops and a community survey
 - In April 2021, Staff will be bringing forward a review of preliminary scenarios and a Council workshop on exploring options for Phase 2 engagement

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Ensuring questions on the survey and through engagement are open ended and not directive
- The overarching goals of the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process and these goals being reflected in the outcomes

- Walkability in the different neighbourhoods shown on the map included in the presentation

b. COMMUNITY WELLNESS/LIVABILITY continued:

3. Strengthening Communities Service Grant Opportunity

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services.

Presentation:

1. Michelle Miller, Senior Financial Analyst, and Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, provided a presentation. Highlights included:
 - The grant is focused on supporting unsheltered homeless populations and addressing related community impacts
 - Federal and Provincial government has committed \$100 million
 - The City would be eligible for approximately \$2.5 million
 - The application due date is April 16, 2021
 - Eligible expenses can be backdated to September 17th, 2020 and projects must be completed within one year of the project approval, approximately July 2022
 - Project eligibility details include a demonstrated evidence of need in the community and provides temporary solutions but does not create ongoing long-term financial obligations
 - Project for consideration include temporary sheltering, co-design and launch of systems planning organization and submission of a series of small initiatives such as:
 - Rent bank
 - Youth rent supplement
 - Scattered housing
 - Renovation or lease of existing empty space for temporary weather sheltering
 - Downtown security
 - Emergency shelter locations
 - Warming centres
 - Management and support workers for up to five shelter locations
 - A package will be coming to the 2021-MAR-29 Regular Council meeting for review from Council and to take suggestions on projects or items that should be listed in the grant application

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Funding should be earmarked for community concerns and a warming centre which will benefit the community as whole
- Inquire about spending options with the Health and Housing Task Force transition team

- Current budget items earmarked for community programs and can these items be paid for by the grant if approved which would allow these funds to remain in the City budget for other items

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, advised the Committee that the Health and Housing Action Plan was looked at for items that could be included in the grant application and a resolution must be approved by Council before the grant can be submitted.

Councillor Armstrong vacated the Shaw Auditorium at 4:26 p.m.

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, advised the Committee that Staff have met with members of the Homeless Coalition for their input and that programs currently in the City budget could be funded through this grant.

Committee discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Capacity to collaborate with service providers and agencies to operate some of the items such as the warming centres
- Requirement of the application is to list items that the grant money will be earmarked for
- Choosing items that will provide the biggest community impact and benefit
- Temporary shelters and the impact of having to close them in one year after the grant money has been spent if the new supportive housing units are not operating by July of 2022
- Using the money to purchase homes for housing and contracting the operation or management of these facilities to service providers or agencies who are capable of operating the housing

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, advised Council that conversations with community partners continue regarding the operation and management of temporary shelters and warming facilities.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, advised Council that properties cannot be bought (capital spending) with the grant money for use as a shelter or temporary warming centre but can be leased or rented.

Councillor Thorpe vacated the Shaw Auditorium at 4:47 p.m.

4. Art in Public Spaces Working Group - Draft Guidelines and Process

Introduced by Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture.

Julie Bevan, Manager, Culture and Special Events, provided a presentation. Highlights included:

- Review panels have been implemented on an ad hoc basis but in the past Council members have been appointed to a standing committee/working group

- Staff reviewed other art practices in municipalities across BC and Canada and had meetings with Staff in the City of Victoria and Ottawa
- The working group will promote awareness and understanding of the value of art in the community and will ensure equity, diversity and inclusion
- Staff are looking for community members with demonstrated experience and training in public art, educators and artists to join the five member working group

Councillor Brown vacated the Shaw Auditorium at 4:53 p.m.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council endorse the Art in Public Spaces Working Group Guidelines and Call for Applications and direct Staff to proceed. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Art in Public Spaces Public Art Collection De-accession 2021

Introduced by Julie Bevan, Manager, Culture and Special Events.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priority Committee recommend that Council approve the de-accession of the following artworks from the City of Nanaimo Public Art collection:

1. Dan Richey, Dungeness Crab (2013);
2. Yvonne Vander Kooi and students of Bayview Elementary, The Hummingbird Project (2013); and,
3. Yvonne Vander Kooi, At Play (2007).

The motion carried unanimously.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:59 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER